

May 8, 2007

Thank you for holding hearing on House Bill 4447 and 4448

Until Michigan passed the present voting laws, we did not have problems with voter fraud or voter suppression. Under our present system, students, people with foreign sounding names or appearances, contractors whose jobs take them away from home for long periods of time, and people (especially the elderly) who are recovering from debilitating illnesses and accidents in facilities that provide long-term specialized nursing and rehabilitation care have been adversely effected by our present voting laws.

These groups live in temporary residents due to their job, school, or for medical reasons. Because of their circumstances, they may not change their driver's license or Michigan Ids from their permanent residents to their temporary one. This prevents them from casting a vote in an election where they presently live and whose elected officials effect their lives.

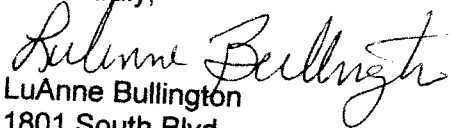
Michigan's present voting laws have created other problems. Ann Arbor's City Clerk's office has been forced to institute many changes in how they carry out an election to prevent groups from using our present voting laws as a tool to disrupt or suppress elections.

Hired poll watchers have used jackbooted tactics to create a barrage of challenges that clogged phone lines to the City Clerks office, tied up poll workers, frightened away legitimate voters, drove voters away because of the long waits created by the numerous challenges, and was successful in suppressing the vote in our city.

The pastor at the church, where I last served as a poll worker, would only allow his church to be used as a polling place if a police car and police officer was stationed in the church's parking lot to prevent disturbances caused by overzealous poll watchers challenging voters based on nothing more than their name or appearances or where they lived in the city.

House Bill 4447 and 4448 corrects the many problems the present law has created. Please approve and pass these bill to eliminate a tool that has been successfully used to suppress the vote in Michigan.

Yours truly,



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